Parish Council
Thursday 18-Jul-2024 @ 18:30
Dave Law Sports Pavilion, Park Crescent, Stewartby

MINUTES

1: Apologies
Apologies were received from Cllr Burnage and Law. It was noted that Cllr Fraser is now on maternity leave. Apologies were also received from Bedford Borough Cllr Spice.

2: Declarations on Interest in items on the Agenda
None

3: To consider any applications for dispensation
None

4: Public Participation
None

5: Consider whether to co-opt a member of the public to the Parish Council
It was RESOLVED to co-opt Thomas (Tom) Williams as a member of the Parish Council.
Clerk to send the Good Councillor Guide and look at training.

6: Minutes of the previous meeting
The Council RESOLVED that Cllr Melville should sign the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on the 20th June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

7: Matters arising from previous minutes
Solar Panels – the Clerk has been unable to make any further progress on this matter due to other work commitments.

Cllr Haley and the Clerk continue to work on the website. James Stirling will be carrying out further works during the Summer. Clerk will liaise with James about the photos for the homepage.

Ongoing issues with emails not being received by Bedford Borough Council. Cllr Spice will speak to Laura Church about this. This matter remains unresolved.

Clerk advised that the invoice had now been raised and send to Cllr Law as the clerk was not given an email address for Patrick Murray.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should send the invoice in the post.

Cllr Melville advised that Warners had now caught up on the works within the village.

Cllr Melville also advised that a concern was raised with Houghton Conquest Parish Council was discussed at the last meeting and this matter has now been resolved.

Cllr Banks raised concerns about the tree that is on O & H land and is causing an issue for the Stewartby Club.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would try and get the contact details for O & H.

8: Chairman's Report
The Chair advised that he and Cllr Banks had met with the Stewartby Bowls Club as they had concerns regarding the use of the kitchen. It was agreed that for a trial period the kitchen would be kept unlocked however if the Parish Council has a prebooked event then the kitchen cannot be used. This will be reviewed in three months.

The Stewartby Bowls Club are also unhappy with the number of keys that they have for the building however it was RESOLVED that this should remain unchanged.

Cllr Melville also advised that a decision was expected on Universal Studios within 4 – 6 weeks.

9: Report from Bedford Borough Council

None

10: Clerk's Financial Report

10.1 Authorise payments for BACS Transfer
The Council RESOLVED to authorise the BACS Reports for the Parish Council and the Sports Pavilion.

10.2 Balances of Accounts
Members were advised that as at the 30th June 2024, the balances of the Parish Council and Sports Fields accounts were as follows:

£22,172.38
£37,140.51
£16,786.03
£419,342.66

10.3 Budget Monitoring
The Clerk advised that a Budget Monitoring Report had been circulated for all Councillors to review. The Clerk will continue to work on this in Scribe to ensure that any coding errors are remedied.

10.4 VAT Returns
The Clerk gave a brief update on her personal circumstances and the reasons that they have been unable to complete outstanding VAT Returns. The Court has set out a plan for the return of the Clerk's belongings and also the Parish Council's.

The Clerk will provide a further update mid/late August.

11: Quotations for authorisation

Cllr Melville advised that the Village Hall Clerk was in need of a new laptop. The Council RESOLVED that a budget of up to £500 would be agreed.

12: Planning Applications & Decisions

12.1 24/01368/FUL Full Planning Application proposed single storey side and rear extension with pitched roof @152 Montgomery Close Stewartby Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 9LP

The Council RESOLVED to object to this planning application as the new flue for the woodburner is not in keeping with the Conservation Area and also the second door at the front should be a window.

12.2 None

13: Amenities:

13.1 Highways/Lighting
None

13.2 Recreation Area
The Council was referred to the ROSPA Inspection Report that had previously been circulated.

Cllr Melville aired his frustration about the state of the play area and the lack of progress in having a plan and grant funding to develop this area. If Councillors agree to do something then they must do it. It is a key part and public duty of the

role.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should get a quote for the testing and a sum of up to £1,000 was agreed to go ahead with these works.

It was also RESOLVED that like for like quotes for new equipment should be obtained. Quotes should also be obtained for a replacement roundabout for the Sports Pavilion play area.

13.3 Newsletter
Cllr Melville will produce a new stye newsletter (two sides of A4). It will include information on projects completed, CCTV upgrade, events, Universal Studios, who does what and the Clerk will draft something about Corporate Social Responsibility.

13.4 Sports Field/Pavilion
It was confirmed that the Council had previously agreed that Councillors could hire the Sports Pavilion at 50% of the cost. This was a recommendation from the Dave Law sports Pavilion Committee.

The Council discussed a recent issue that had arisen when asking two football teams to move bookings due to pitch maintenance.

It was RESOLVED that, in future, emails should be sent out individually. The Council also RESOLVED that each of the teams should move one booking and if this is not acceptable to them then they will be cancelled.

13.5 Village Hall
Cllr Melville advised that bookings for the Village Hall had slowed down. If this continues into the Autumn then the Council will need to provide financial support.

13.6 Policing
Cllr Melville advised that he would be attending a Community Priority Setting event being run by the Police. He advised that the crime statistics remained low for the area. The community Police team will also be recruiting another Police Officer.

13.7 Encyclis
None

14: Community Events 2024

Cllr Melville advised that the Summer Event had been spoilt by the poor weather.

It was RESOLVED that the Remembrance Service would take place on Monday 11th November 2024 led by Cllr Banks.

It was RESOLVED that Clerk would invoice the local schools and Cllr Banks would speak to Robbie about playing at the event.

The Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 30th November 2024. Some preparation has already been done for this however there will be a further meeting of the Parish Council on the 12th September 2024 at 7.00 pm to plan for this event.

15: Grants

It was RESOLVED that a comprehensive update on grants should be provided at the next meeting.

16: Council Surgery / Community Engagement

It was RESOLVED that dates need to be agreed with Cllr Spice.

17: Confidential Item: Members of the public will be excluded from this part of the mtg

17.1 HR – please see separate Minutes.17.1 HR – please see separate Minutes.

18: Items of an urgent nature or for inclusion on the next agenda

None

19: Close of Meeting and items for the next Agenda.

Meeting closed at 8.21 pm.

20: Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was RESOLVED that the Council would not meet during August. It was RESOLVED that all the usual monthly supplier invoices and wages are approved for payment and that the Clerk will refer anything else to the September meeting.